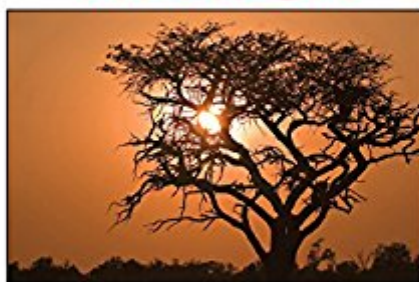


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A Short History Of Africa

A UNABRIDGED
SHORT HISTORY
OF
AFRICA



READ BY RALPH COSHAM
ROLAND OLIVER
AND J. D. FAGE



Synopsis

Much of Africa's past has now been excavated from ignorance and error, revealing a rich and previously little-known human heritage. This classic work marshals the most authoritative views on Africa into an absorbing narrative. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I read the 1966 (second) edition of this volume and was not aware of updates until opening this site. Despite much political and demographic change in Africa over the last 30-odd years, and despite the availability of much more research and the advent of DNA-based studies, not even heard of in 1966, I found Oliver and Fage's work a pleasure to read. Their chapters are intelligently organized, the flow of ideas and trends unblemished by superfluous detail or tedious asides. The entire continent is covered, North Africa as well as Sub-Saharan, though personally, I felt a little more could have been said about Madagascar. As a reader without a professional stake in African history, I found this book just the thing. It raised many issues that I had not thought of, told me about many patterns and issues of which I had known nothing, and did so in clear, concise language which kept my interest throughout. I strongly recommend this book to anyone interested in African history. I myself will look for an updated edition to see what the authors say about the last third of a century.

The authors did a great job. They could have made this too high-level and impossible to understand for those who don't have enough background in African history, but they haven't. They could have

made it too simplistic and abbreviated so that the reader would be missing important information, but they haven't either. They found just the right balance and the right approach to cover the entire history of Africa without dwelling on any details for too long and without skipping anything that would prevent the reader from getting a good understanding. In some chapters, the book is a little heavy, but you can't put that much information without it feeling dense sometimes. Whenever I found one chapter a little too much to handle all at once, I simply re-read a few of its pages and I was ready to move on. I must say, I would recommend this book to anyone looking for a primer on African history, I learned so much from it. The only parts I wish they had given a little more information on are the former colonies of Italy and Spain. In particular they didn't say very much about Somalia, Libya, and the Spanish colony west of Morocco.

It is very obvious that the authors, Oliver and Fage, know their stuff very well, that said I found the book highly technical with little explanation for the historical voyeur, making me constantly have to resort to the Britannica to fill out my understanding as they never gave an general introduction for me to hold onto. By chapter 5, this grew wearisome, and I jumped ship. I think if you have a good understanding of anthropological and archaeological terms you would do better than me but if you are looking for a leisurely general overview, like I was, this is not it.

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